

in these areas show that the species is now much reduced. In Mao area in Senapati district, as reported by the local people, it is hardly seen nowadays.

Tylototriton verrucosus is listed under the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 Schedule I as an endangered species, and also in the Wildlife Protection Act, Manipur Rules 1974 as a protected species. Increasing human demands on forest resources and cultivable land, fishing with chemicals have contributed to the diminishing

population throughout its natural habitats in Manipur. It is also eaten by the locals in the area. No effective action has been taken to check the reduction of Lengva in Manipur, and if no attempt is made to preserve the species, this only tailed amphibian will soon become extinct in this State.

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23. NEW RECORD OF CYPRINID FISH *LABEO BATA* (HAMILTON) FROM CHINDWIN DRAINAGE

The fish fauna of Manipur is of great interest as it is drained by two important rivers, the Barak-Brahmaputra and Chindwin-Irrawaddy systems. The western half of the state is drained by the Barak-Brahmaputra system, whereas the Chindwin-Irrawaddy system drains the eastern half, including the central valley. The Chindwin-Irrawaddy system is entirely separated by high mountain ranges from the watersheds of the Barak-Brahmaputra (Chaudhuri 1919). Chatrickong river is formed by two streams, namely Sanalok and Khunukong. Khunukong originates from the western part of the majestic Shiroi peak and flows southeast to join Sanalok, while Sanalok originates at the foothills of the highest peak Khayangphung (2,833 m) of the district which lies near the Indo-Myanmar border, and flows southwards to meet Khunukong. The river then flows as Chatrickong for about 5 km, and enters Myanmar where it is called Nam Panga (Myanmarese) and flows to the east and then turns southward to meet the Chindwin.

Jayaram (1981, 1999), Talwar and Jhingran (1991) do not mention the availability of this fish from the Chindwin drainage of Myanmar. Jayaram (1981) recorded 26 valid species from southeast Asia. Sen (1985) reported the fish from Assam and the northeastern states

of India that include Brahmaputra drainage, but did not mention the specific locality of the collection. Burman (1988) recorded it from Tripura. During our ichthyofaunal collection from 1996-98, five specimens were collected from the Chatrickong river. The species is reported for the first time from Chindwin drainage.

The fish were collected with the help of cast net, side-tracking of rivers and also by 'khaishang' — a unique indigenous method of catching migratory fishes on their way back from smaller hillstreams after breeding. This technique is commonly used in southeastern Ukhrul district in Manipur. The fish were preserved in 10% formaline. The types have been deposited in the Manipur University Museum of Fishes (MUMF).

Material examined: MUMF/1587, 118.1 mm SL, MUMF/1588, 110.4 mm SL, MUMF/1589, 92.6 mm SL, Chatrickong river at Sanalok, 150 km from Imphal, 6.vi.1996; 2 unregistered specimens 98.5-108.2 mm SL, 20.viii.1998, coll. Keishing Selim.

Diagnosis: D. ii, 10; P. i, 13-15; V. i, 8; A. ii, 5-6; L.tr. 6/1/4; L1. 40-41; predorsal scales 14-15. The species is characterised by a lower lip slightly fringed, folded back and joined to isthmus by a narrow bridge; small tubercle above

mandibular symphysis; irregular black blotch present on 4th-6th scales of lateral line.

Colour: Dorsal half of flanks golden yellow; inner half of flanks and belly silvery. An irregular black blotch on 4th-6th scales of lateral line. Faint blotch on caudal peduncle. Pelvic and anal fins dark with orange red tip.

Habitat: Mostly found in the plains course of the river. It moves upstream during the breeding season, which starts from April and returns to the lower course of the river after breeding.

Distribution: India: widely distributed: Bangladesh and Nepal.

Remarks: Talwar and Jhingran (1991) listed 31 species of *Labeo* in the Indian region. However, Jayaram and Dhas revised the genus and listed 28 species in eight complexes (Jayaram 1999). The species is common in the Indian region. In Manipur, about seven species of *Labeo* were found, including *Labeo gunius* and *L. rohita*.

Labeo bata was one of the common species caught in the Chatrickong river during the monsoon. During the breeding season, the fish moves in shoals upstream. It is esteemed in the region for its taste and is highly priced.

The fish migrate upstream from April to July and return from August to November. In

other seasons, it was not present, as reported by fishermen. Being a migratory fish, it is mostly caught by 'khaishang', an indigenous technique practised in the region for catching migratory fishes. In the absence of specimens from the river system in Myanmar, study of fishes from the Chindwin headwaters of the Ukhrul district gives a picture of the Chindwin fauna. *Labeo bata* is recorded for the first time from the Chindwin drainage. As it migrates from the Myanmar side to the waterheads of Chindwin drainage, it is likely that it may also be distributed in Myanmar.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India, New Delhi (Project scheme: No. 14-36-95-NAB/RE) for financial assistance. We also thank the Head, Department of Life Sciences, Manipur University for laboratory facilities.

July 6, 2000

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